

I am a general class amateur radio operator and my call sign is N2DUP. I have been licensed in the amateur service since 1982 and have held my call sign since then (although I did hold the call KA2QFL for a month between going from novice to technician class).

I wish to comment on the NPRM to raise the fee for amateur radio operators who hold vanity call signs, as proposed under the "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2003" (MD 03-83), as it was released March 26, 2003.

As I have held my call sign for more than 20 years -- and it has become a branded part of my author's byline in numerous amateur radio, personal communications and hobby radio publications -- I have no intent at this time of making a change. When I moved from the second call district to the zero call district almost 14 years ago, I elected to retain my second call district call sign, primarily for aforementioned reasons.

While I doubt I ever will consider a vanity call sign, the one thing that probably would keep me from considering applying for a vanity call is the ever-increasing price of such vanity. I am sure the numbers bear out that few amateurs who elect to take vanity calls return those to the general pool and take a randomly-assigned call. Thus, you are locking in that call sign for life, at an undetermined fee. While the cost may be \$14.50 now, who is to say that that cost could not climb into the hundreds of dollars -- or more -- by the time that amateur nears the end of their radio-active avocation in their life.

It is for that very reason, and the fact that there hopefully are several more renewals on my amateur license in my lifetime (I am 45 years of age) that I refrain from contributing to the FCC's coffers because of the unknown factor of the cost of vanity as I enter my senior years.

I trust that the FCC will consider an entirely different approach to the cost of amateur vanity calls. Perhaps the time now is to lock in a higher fee that will hold in place for a 10-year period. If a \$20 fee were to be implemented now, it could remain in place for 10, or better yet, 11 years, to ensure the next 10 years of a new renewal will be at the same \$20 rate for one more term.

Lastly, perhaps the FCC should consider a lifetime fee for amateur vanity call signs. The commission could collect an upfront \$100 fee that would lock in that vanity use for life, unless canceled by either the commission or the license holder for various reasons, including enforcement actions or the licensee's desire to change to a new call sign.

I trust that the commission will consider alternatives to annual increases in the cost of amateur radio vanity call sign fees and consider a new approach that would bring more value to the licensee and even additional funds to the commission by being inventive with the approach.

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